

CONCLUSION

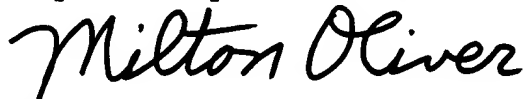
In view of the foregoing amendments and comments, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1-9 and 30-51 are now clear, and patentably distinguish over GEE et al., WILLIAMS, ENSOR, LE, CROOK, NAKANISHI, RICKER, KRAUSE, and the other art of record.

If the Examiner detects any remaining informalities which need to be corrected to place the application in condition for allowance, a telephone call to Applicant's counsel is invited.

With respect to PTOL-326, item 12 (Foreign Priority), the Examiner is requested to confirm that the World Intellectual Property Office (WIPO) has confirmed to the US PTO that a copy of the German priority document, DE 198 45 626.3 of 5 OCT. 1998 was timely filed in International Application PCT/EP99/05282, of which the present application is the US National Phase. Form PCT/DO/EO/903 indicated a Priority Document was received.

An extension petition and \$1020 extension fee are submitted herewith; if any **additional** fee is necessary, please construe this paper as a Petition therefor, and charge the fee to Deposit Account 23-0442.

Respectfully submitted,



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Enc.: Petition for 3-month Extension
RCE Transmittal
Fee Calculation Sheet

Att. Docket No. 870-003-133